

Final DRAFT – Main Street Highways Program

June 2010

Why initiate a Main Street Highways Program?

In cities and counties across Washington, sections of state highways and arterials range from those that focus on moving people and goods through a region to those intended to provide access to local destinations. Between these two extremes, are highways and arterials that run through cities and must serve as both thoroughfares and main streets.

There are approximately 500 miles of state highways and additional miles of arterial streets that must provide local access for the community, and at the same time, serve the regional mobility needs; they face twice the pressure to maintain traffic flow and ensure community livability and safety. These locations also see some of the highest rates of pedestrian involved traffic collisions.

Both local agencies and WSDOT face challenges implementing transportation projects on main street highways due to shared responsibilities and authorities for design, construction, maintenance, and other aspects of the system. Also, many of the communities with state highways that serve as their main streets do not have the resources to coordinate state route development plans with local comprehensive plan updates to reflect community needs early and upfront in the planning process. With current budget constraints, WSDOT is also unable to provide these resources and support.

What are the desired outcomes?

The grant program will help support the federal livable communities initiative by encouraging local governments to **retrofit main streets to provide safe access to all users**, including bicyclists, pedestrians, motorists, freight carriers, and public transportation users, with the goals of:

State Transportation Policy Goal - Safety

- a) Improving safety by designing major arterials to include features such as wider sidewalks, dedicated bicycle facilities, medians, and pedestrian streetscape features, including trees where appropriate.
Measured by: Reduction in serious and fatal traffic collisions in target areas, motor vehicle operating speeds, etc.

State Transportation Policy Goal - Environment

- b) Promoting healthy communities by encouraging walking, bicycling, and using public transportation;
Measured by: Mode shift, regional VMT, etc.

State Transportation Policy Goal - Mobility

- c) Protecting the environment and reducing congestion by providing safe alternatives to single-occupancy driving;
Measured by: Mode shift, regional VMT, average trip length, travel time, etc.

State Transportation Policy Goal - Stewardship

- d) Preserving community character by involving local citizens and stakeholders to participate in planning and design decisions.
Measured by: Green space, adaptive re-use, infill, real estate values, business retention, etc.

How does this program fit within the strategic direction of the agency?

This program will help WSDOT meet its strategic goals in the areas of safety, environment, economic vitality, mobility, and stewardship. It will also help the agency begin to address the new State Transportation Policy Goal focused on improving and enhancing economic vitality of communities across Washington.

What resources does WSDOT have available to administer this program?

WSDOT Region Local Programs Engineers are well equipped to assist local agencies, tribal governments, and others with management and implementation of these projects. Technical assistance resources also exist within Highways and Local Programs, Engineering Services and other WSDOT Divisions including: Traffic, Design, Planning, Environmental Services, and Maintenance and Operations. Regional Transportation Planning Organizations may also have resources to assist transportation partners in developing and implementing these projects.

What are the benefits related to this program?

This program provides an opportunity to increase coordination between WSDOT and local agencies to reduce modal conflicts (freight, pedestrians, transit, motor vehicles, bicyclists, etc.). It also provides an opportunity to work together maximizing WSDOT and local resources to resolve common project delivery challenges including traffic management, posted speeds, on-street parking, and business access.

What types of projects would be eligible?

This is not a pavement resurfacing program and paving elements will not be eligible for funding through this program. However, projects that leverage paving investments will be considered higher priority.

Sample Eligible Activities:

1. Project Development – up to 30 percent of project cost
 - Community planning and design
 - Public outreach/involvement
2. Right of Way Acquisition
3. Construction
 - Sidewalks
 - Crossing/Intersection treatments/Roundabouts
 - Signage, striping
 - Streetscaping, Gateway treatments, Community art
 - Bio-retention features
 - Lighting
 - Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations
 - Bike lanes and bike boulevards
 - Trail crossings
 - Bike parking and stations
 - Medians and refuge islands
 - Freight accommodation
 - Transit accommodation
 - Furnishings
 - Frontage improvements
 - Roadway construction
 - Network improvements
 - Information Technology Services (ITS) treatments (Wi-Fi)

*Note: .4 percent to .6 percent should be added to each project up front to ensure adequate maintenance and operations funding. If these funds are not included, a maintenance and operations agreement should be in place that demonstrates the community's capacity to adequately cover these costs.

How will project proposals be evaluated and prioritized?

Project selection criteria should consider whether the project:

- Addresses a priority location on main street highways (within one of 180 cities and 500+/- miles of main street highways identified by WSDOT). These locations may be identified as safety priorities, mobility priorities, freight priorities, or needs associated with scenic and recreational highways, bicycle and pedestrian mobility needs, or other.
- [Project area] has compatible elements of urban form (storefronts, mix of uses, appropriately scaled buildings):
 - Meets Federal Highway Administration's six principles of livability
 - Provide more transportation choices
 - Promote equitable, affordable housing
 - Enhance economic competitiveness
 - Support existing communities
 - Coordinate policies and leverage investment
 - Value communities and neighborhoods
- Supports multiple state transportation policy goals including:
 - Safety
 - Mobility
 - Environment
 - Economic Vitality
 - Stewardship
 - Preservation
- Is consistent with local, regional, and state plans
- Is ready to proceed
- Proponent has put in place local ordinance(s) in support of managed access
- Makes an improvement vs. replacing existing infrastructure
- Has demonstrated local support (policies, plans, ordinances)
- Has committed match

What is the right size for this program?

The following considerations helped to shape the size and time scale of the proposed program:

- 500 miles of main street highways
- Cost figures for the types of elements included in the program (See unit cost table on Page 4)
- Demand for related programs – Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety, Safe Routes, and others
- Technical assistance and program support resources currently available

Estimated Need: \$500 to \$800 million programmed over ten years with 8-12 projects funded per year, equaling a total of 120 projects retrofitting main streets in Washington communities. The average project proposal is estimated to be between \$5 and \$10 million with initial selections expected to be smaller, lower cost projects in the \$2 to \$5 million range.

Sample Default Unit Costs – Unit Prices 2009

Sample Retrofit Items	Unit	Est. Unit Cost – 2009
Benches	Each	\$6-800
Bike Boxes – Green Bike Lanes (Source: City of Portland)	LF	\$10
Bike Parking	Per Bike	\$100
Bike Routes – Sign and Stripe	Per Mile	\$18,000
Bio-Retention Features (Source: City of Portland)	SF	\$10-\$30
Curb, Gutter, Sidewalk	LF	\$50
Directional Signs	Each	\$16
Frontage Improvements	Each	\$20,000
Gateway Treatment	Each	\$15,000
Information Kiosk	Each	\$10,000
Markings	LF	\$1
Median	Per 100 ft	\$30,000
Mid-block Crossings	Each	\$10,000
Pedestrian Retrofit at Intersection (bulb-outs, crosswalks, signal heads, lighting, streetscape)	Each	\$150,000
Refuge Island	Each	\$40-\$60,000
Repair Sidewalk and Curb Ramps	SF	\$15
Roadside Restoration	LS/Lane-Mile	\$200,000
Roundabouts	Each	\$300,000
Sidewalk Pavers	SF	\$10-15
Signal	Each	\$200,000
Signing	LS/Lane-Mile	\$50,000
Street Lights	Each	\$2-4,000
Trail Crossing – signalized	Each	\$80,000
Trash/Recycle Receptacles	Each	\$1,000
Tree Grates	Each	\$1,000